



Diversity Task Group Minutes

Date: December 10, 2018
Time: 6:45pm – Social Time; 7:00-9:00pm - Meeting
Location: Jefferson Cutter House

1. Introductions and ice breaker
2. Minutes approved from last meeting
3. Sign-In Attendees: Michaiah, Katell, Regina, Captain Julie Flaherty, Lt Dan Kelly, Allan, Eve, Kathryn, Mary, Purvi, Brooks, Louise, Kelly, Sophie, Barbara, Rajeev, Lynette, Julia, Judith, Janice, Claire, Alberto, Mona
4. Captain Flaherty and Lt Kelly were introduced as our special guests from the Arlington Police Department (APD). Captain Flaherty gave background on how she came to this meeting, including to have initial discussions about bias training in APD. She oversees the service support division and, more recently, is the rep to the Rainbow Commission and community relations in general. Lt Kelly is here as he runs the daily operations of the police department as day shift supervisor. They would like feedback on what they are doing well and what they can do better. APD has 73 officers. This includes 2 Black officers, 1 Asian-American officer, 1 Native American officer, and 7 female officers. Captain Flaherty mentioned that APD gets contacted often about their practices and tries to model their community policing.
5. DIG updates:
 - Thompson (Judith): Last week, there were racial slurs/hatred found in the boys restroom. This is being investigated by APD and HRC. The Principal accepted help from DIG on a response — a parent forum to be facilitated/speaker. Judith needs help identifying a possible facilitator, one option is a Thompson SW. Captain Flaherty said it's the 7th incident in the last three months that they are investigating, and they have a resource officer who works with the schools and is based at the high school.
 - Lynette: She gave a high-level update on what has been happening at all the DIGs. Brackett, specifically, has created a mission statement that was informed by listening sessions. Brackett's biggest challenge is that Carlos Hoyt has limited availability, so they are looking for others to help with facilitating. Also looking to train parents on bystander training. And waiting

to hear back from an AEF grant proposal that included several schools — would be for a sharing stories parent workshop and simultaneously a presentation for kids.

- Rajeev: (Gibbs/Ottoson) No more updates since last time. Michaiah mentioned that Ottoson in particular needs attention.
- Katell/Claire: (Peirce) Core group meeting next weekend, work to be done and opportunities exist, METCO liaison work to form family friends —the Bridging Communities event was discussed with its positives and things to improve, including more support for the staff.
- Purvi (AHS): Suggestions were to use students from within rather than bring parents in from the outside to do trainings, as well as to have anonymous reporting be an option because there may be many more incidents than are currently being reported.

6. Town diversity project:

- Lynette and Sophie: “Belonging in Arlington: A Community Conversation” There are 15 writers who have committed to writing an article. Goal is to represent many aspects of diversity. Next step is to develop an ad inviting people to apply to be the subject of an article. Questions will be prepared in advance so that no one is put on the spot. Culminate with a celebration at Town Hall as well as smaller events at local businesses.

7. APD Hiring Practices:

- In addition to officers, they have 30 civilians working for them. There are more people of color in those positions.
- To become an Arlington police officer, residents are given priority over candidates from other towns.
- Hiring includes very in-depth background checks on new employees that includes talking to friends and neighbors as well as social media accounts: physical test, police academy (26 weeks). Prior to academy the process takes 5 months.
- APD has no control over the list of candidates that Civil Services gives them to start with. They find that there aren’t diverse candidates signing up for the test because Arlington residents get preference. Chief Ryan goes to community colleges to recruit. The only way to change that is if the APD left Civil Service.
- People can transfer into the department. But Arlington is one of the lower paying departments in the area, which comes from the town budget.

8. APD Bias-based Policing:

- Officers go through a 40-hr course in bias-based policing concerns.
- In 2016, all APD went through re-training on bias-based policing (4-hr training). Tends to happen every three years. A suggestion was made to increase frequency and to include community members in trainings.
- The department strives to practice procedural justice and be inclusive but know that doesn't always happen
- 21st century is all about communication. Change role from warrior to the guardian of the community, so they look for that in their hiring.
- The suggestion was made for officers to take the implicit bias online test
- APD has a policy that they are committed to preserving constitutional rights of all citizens: procedural justice, treating all with respect
- There is a committee that meets to review all use of force reports. In 2017, 10 were reported and 2018 there are 7 so far. They would be open to having a citizen sit on that committee. They pride themselves on being transparent.

APD tries to use restorative justice wherever it's appropriate and both parties agree. Used for non-violent, low-level misdemeanors. It's been used often for incidents of graffiti.

- Regarding a question about the APD officer who wrote inflammatory statements about violence, Captain Flaherty said they can't talk about active investigations. APD have passed on their findings to the town manager. It has been a frustrating thing within the department, and there was disappointment with how the officer expressed himself.
- A suggestion was made to bring in someone from Black Lives Matter to interface with the police. Is it possible that some day there would be a Black Lives Matter sign in front of the police department?
- Another suggestion was made to bring police officers into the high school to teach elective courses, especially to show how the path to being an officer can include a focus on social justice. APD does have a high school intern.
- APD doesn't talk with people about their immigration status. Arlington is a sanctuary city. They don't see ICE coming into town much, have come once since declared a sanctuary city.